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Statement submitted by International Relations Students' Association of McGill University, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

We, the International Students' Association of McGill, are a federally incorporated non-profit organization, established and operating at McGill University in Montréal, Canada. We are one of the few active student-run organisations with ECOSOC special consultative status on the global stage today. International Students' Association of McGill is an independent group at the University, comprised of a diverse cohort of McGill students. Volunteerism lies at the heart of International Students' Association of McGill. All of our programmes are executed by full-time students who devote precious hours and diligent effort to promoting student engagement in global affairs on our campus and in our respective local and international communities. Of particular note is International Students' Association of McGill's Junior Peacemakers initiative which offers elementary school students a globally-minded peace education through activities and discussion with intersectional approaches, in hopes of igniting their passion for change-making.

Through our many years of International Students' Association of McGill's consultative participation at the United Nations, it would be impossible for us to overstate our gratitude to the international community for the countless opportunities extended to us. The experiences and wealth of knowledge garnered by our delegates at the United Nations have propelled our pursuit for positive change.

International Students' Association of McGill recognizes, after a thorough examination of the priority theme for the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, that the challenges and inequalities facing women and girls are exacerbated by the inaccessible nature and lack of infrastructure in social protection and public service systems. International Students' Association of McGill appreciates the substantial progress and recognized importance of social protectionism through Target 1.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which recommends nationally appropriate social protection measures and systems for all, including floors. Progress towards gender equality is hindered when social protection systems fail to adequately address the needs of women and girls and consider the unique social and political contexts of their challenges. In such a time where gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is at the forefront of the international agenda, it is paramount that we recognize the need for accessible and comprehensive solutions. Without a meaningful effort, women and girls will face further marginalization within the gender gap — particularly with regards to education and income insecurity, which perpetuate the vulnerability of women.

International Students' Association of McGill acknowledges that social protection programs must undergo a gender-based and intersectional analysis in constructing inclusive approaches that consider the varying lived experiences of those identifying as a woman or girl. The diversity and importance of each woman's experience must be accounted for and must be a priority for the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

International Students' Association of McGill is an organization that passionately engages with international relations. We celebrate the years of international progress achieved because of the United Nations and anticipate the opportunities for progress yet to come. International Students' Association of McGill will return to the Commission on the Status of Women this year seeking innovative solutions for women across the globe and looking to give a voice to the unique perspective we hold as the young leaders of our generation.